



**HOME BUILDERS & REMODELERS ASSOCIATION
OF CONNECTICUT, INC.**

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Is Our
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**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
Public Hearing Testimony
February 17, 2023**

To: Chairpersons Rep. Kavros Degraw, Sen. Rahman, Ranking Members Rep. Zullo, Sen. Fazio and distinguished Members of the Planning & Development Committee

From: Jim Perras, CEO

Re:
S.B. No. 1001 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN SEWAGE DISPOSAL SYSTEMS AND ALTERNATIVE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS. (Support with possible amendments)

H.B. No. 6294 (Proposed) AN ACT PROHIBITING THE REQUIREMENT OF A DONATION OF LAND AS A CONDITION OF SUBDIVISION APPROVAL. (Support with amendments)

The Home Builders and Remodelers Association of Connecticut (HBRA-CT) is a professional trade association with nearly 900 hundred business members statewide, employing tens of thousands of Connecticut residents. Our association of small businesses is comprised of residential and commercial builders, land developers, remodelers, general contractors, subcontractors, suppliers and those businesses and professionals that provide services to our diverse industry. We build between 70% to 80% of all new homes and apartments in Connecticut each year and engage in countless home remodeling projects.

The HBRA-CT thanks the Committee for raising Senate Bill 1001. If passed, Senate Bill 1001 would amend CGS 22a-430(g) by specifying that small community sewerage systems of a certain capacity would fall under the regulation of the DPH. Currently, all community sewerage systems regardless of size and capacity are regulated by the DEEP. DEEP's current regulatory processes can be both timely and costly, needlessly hampering much needed housing production. DPH already has regulatory jurisdiction over the vast majority of septic systems in Connect and therefore has the capacity and expertise to also oversee these community systems. In addition, the HBRA-CT strongly supports increasing DPH oversight and authority over sewerage systems by giving it authority over all systems with the capacity of 10,000 gallon or less per day for all the reasons previously mentioned.

To promote increased housing production and affordability, the HBRA-CT suggests the legislature's primary focus be on traditional septic systems. In Connecticut Alternative Treatment systems (AT) are defined as where treatment occurs somewhere other than the septic tank and leach field. A limited number of these AT systems can reliably

remove nitrogen at the desired removal efficiency; the majority cannot. However, in general, when it comes to reducing the footprint and ultimately the cost of development, AT systems will not achieve this objective due to the high capital cost of the equipment and ongoing operation and maintenance costs. Furthermore, the land area occupied by the AT unit and leaching system is rarely less than the leaching system without the AT assuming there are no unnecessary safety factors required by the Department.

Should the Planning and Development Committee find opposition to Section 2 of this bill, the HBRA-CT respectfully recommends that the Committee consider striking Section 2 of the bill in its entirety to ensure passage of Section 1.

The HBRA-CT thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony on H.B. 6294. The HBRA-CT presumes the intent of this legislation is to maximize the use of developable land and to allow for greater density, thereby allowing for more affordably built homes. **If that is the case the HBRA-CT would suggest that this bill be amended so that title 8 also be amended to delete “fees in lieu of” as well.** Said fees can be costly and are absorbed in the final cost of a home or rental unit. In a presentation before this committee and others earlier this year, Dr. Dietz, chief economist for the National Association of Home Builders reported that regulatory costs associated with all levels of government account for \$93,870 per new home which equates to a 11% gain between 2016 and 2021. Housing affordability statistics are at the lowest they’ve been in recent years. As such, to remove both land donations and Fees In Lieu Of, would be a great step in the right direction to address the housing affordability and accessibility crisis we currently find ourselves in.

The HBRA-CT once again thanks the Planning & Development for holding a hearing S.B. 1001 and H.B. 6294.